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"Making America's Communities Safer"

Lessons in Preventing Homicide

By Erin Dalton

Lessons in Preventing Homicide, by Erin Dalton, reports on strategic problem-solving approaches to preventing violent crimes. Ms. Dalton, formerly the project monitor of the Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative (SACSI) at the National Institute of Justice, presents intervention models and research results from the SACSI program. This document also presents techniques for selecting and collaborating with task force partners, identifying and assessing target problems, selecting and implementing interventions, and evaluating and modifying interventions.

Project Safe Neighborhoods Report

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> *Big City, USA*—Three young men operate a successful drug house, in what could be any high-crime, inner-city neighborhood in America. One mans the front window, serving as lookout. Another mans the door, managing customer orders and collecting money. The third, a friend who works for drugs, has the perilous job of running the drugs between the stash (in the rear yard) and the customer. All three recognize their risks. They've all been arrested and robbed in the past, but they still seem to come out ahead—until this night. The stickup boys decide their money and drugs aren't enough this time and rob and assassinate all three.[1]
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> *Rochester, New York*—Two kids, David and Lamar, grow up just blocks apart in one of the city's most dangerous neighborhoods. On these streets, young, black men, like David and Lamar, face a homicide rate 67 times the national average. David and Lamar are friends. Their parents are friends. They're poor, do poorly in school, sell (and sometimes use) drugs to get by. Lamar's grandmother's car is stolen and he suspects David, who has a habit of borrowing cars that don't belong to him. The dispute lingers. Lamar, egged on by his friends, threatens to kill David and one day shoots him in the side. David is wounded but survives the attack. His mother is keenly aware that David is in danger but does not know how to save him. Five weeks later Lamar finishes the job, fatally shooting David in the head. Two lives are ruined: David is dead, and Lamar is sentenced to 18 years-to-life in a State prison.[2]
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> *Los Angeles*—Two known Hispanic gang members in the Hollenbeck neighborhood approach a Hispanic youth from a rival neighborhood and ask the question, "Where you from?" This is meant as a clear provocation, but an answer of "Nowhere" means that the youth does not claim a neighborhood or gang and should escape further provocation. Unfortunately, the shooter does not wait for an answer and opens fire on the victim.[3]

These are the stories that make up the homicide statistics in our neighborhoods, cities, and country. These homicides take place most frequently in poor, crime-ridden areas of our largest cities,[4] tearing apart communities of color at a much higher rate than they do white communities.[5] The cases most often involve young men[6] and almost always involve firearms.[7] These are the stories nobody wants to hear, especially not the police, prosecutors, or other criminal justice system actors who are sent to sift through the rubble of lost lives. Rarely are there viable witnesses to these murders, rarely trails that don't

lead to a dead end, few arrests, and even fewer convictions.[8] And many of these homicides lead to retaliatory assaults or homicides before the police can even clear the first crime scene.[9] After years of working these cases, many criminal justice practitioners were skeptical that anything could be done to prevent homicide in their cities. Many yearned for a new approach to preventing violence.

The Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative (SACSI) directly challenged this skepticism by starting with the simple but powerful notion that law enforcement and others have the power to prevent the next homicide. Prosecutors, police officers, probation officers, and research partners wondered: Could the decisions we make really affect who will get shot tomorrow night or next week? This provocative question was eventually answered with a "yes," but only after considerable hard work by many people.

First, it was realized that this question could not be answered by a single person or a single agency—teamwork was needed. Second, the question had to be taken apart into more manageable inquiries. What if we could identify the most violent individuals and most violent groups on the street? What if we could identify the drug houses most likely to be robbed? What if we could follow, document, and map the feuds among criminally involved individuals and groups? These and many other questions were asked and answered in a thoughtful and deliberative way by the SACSI sites, which sought information from both traditional and nontraditional sources.

Next, the SACSI sites learned that they needed strategies designed to deal with the specific opportunities presented by the data. The working groups considered the following: What if we established an early warning system to monitor assaults or

shootings among these individuals and groups and intervened before they became homicides? What if we communicated clearly to these individuals and groups that violent behavior would not be tolerated and that if they behaved violently, all of the resources of the community would be brought against them? What if we offered a way out, with services and job training? What if we actually made good on our word?

The question, "How can the decisions we make today change who will get shot tomorrow or next week?" became answerable and was answered—although differently in each community. The days of discussing random homicides—of knowing that an individual was at risk to kill or be killed and not being able to intervene in time—became ever more rare.

SACSI sites' efforts to develop the strategic partnerships, to collect and analyze the information needed to answer the questions raised above, and to design and evaluate strategies aimed at preventing the next homicide demonstrate that large-scale problem-solving efforts can be rewarding. They also demonstrate the difficulty and challenges associated with implementing this model.

This report presents lessons from more than 10 cities that attempted to prevent violence by understanding their local violence problem. It reviews the genesis of SACSI, the SACSI model, the organizational structures that seemed most effective under SACSI, the problem-solving approaches that evolved, the tactics that emerged, and their effectiveness at reducing violence.

Boston: Before and beyond

The 1990s was a decade of tremendous innovation in American law enforcement. It followed a long period of time during which many of the core practices of policing (e.g., preventive patrol) were challenged by research evidence.[10] During this period of pessimism, some scholars called for the public to recognize the "fact" that it mattered little what the police did to prevent crime.[11] At the same time, other scholars began to search for new models that might make the police more effective in addressing crime.

One of the most pioneering of these models was that proposed by Herman Goldstein.[12] Goldstein suggested that if police took a more "problem-oriented focus" they could prevent crime more effectively. This problem-oriented approach required police to collect new data, develop new methods of analysis, identify innovative solutions, and assess the success of their efforts.

The problem-oriented policing approach gained widespread popularity among scholars and police practitioners. At this time, some scholars predicted that we would see wholly transformed, problem-solving police departments within 5 years. Ten years later, in spite of a growing body of literature that suggested that problem-oriented policing can lead to more effective control and prevention of crime and disorder, these same scholars found themselves dismayed with how little progress had been made in transforming police departments into problem-solving agencies.[13] Even in the case of some successful problem-oriented policing programs that yielded crime-prevention benefits, researchers noted the failure of problem-oriented policing models to achieve significant depth.[14] In general, problem-solving policing was narrowly focused on small geographic areas (e.g., a park or housing unit, rather than a city), on less serious crime concerns (e.g.,

prostitution or vagrancy, rather than homicide or sexual assault), involved few system actors other than the police, and tended not to involve trained researchers and sophisticated research and analysis techniques.[15]

In 1994, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) supported researchers at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government who were explicitly attempting to broaden problem-solving practices along these dimensions and stop youth violence in Boston.[16] Launched in 1995, their efforts included convening a working group of experienced practitioners, primarily from criminal justice agencies, gathering and analyzing information about youth violence in Boston, designing an intervention, and implementing, evaluating, and modifying that intervention. The intervention developed through the Boston Gun Project, which became known as Operation Ceasefire, was extraordinarily successful: The number of youth homicides, which averaged 44 per year between 1991 and 1995, fell to 26 in 1997 and to 15 in 1998.[17]

Even before a formal evaluation was completed, Boston's Operation Ceasefire was hailed in the media as an unprecedented success. Other major cities started calling and visiting Boston with the hope of duplicating its results. At the same time, the Department of Justice sought to replicate Boston's process that was used to achieve significant reductions in youth homicide; this replication was called the Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative or SACSI.

Simplified, Operation Ceasefire can be viewed as having two major components: the problem-solving *process*—which involved group development, research, intervention, implementation and evaluation—and the *intervention* itself. While many attempted to implement parts or all of the Operation Ceasefire intervention, SACSI explicitly

focused on replicating the process with the hope that the approach that had succeeded with youth violence in Boston would prove applicable to other problems in other cities with other sets of participants. Among NIJ SACSI officials, there was explicitly no expectation that interventions resembling Operation Ceasefire would emerge in the SACSI sites.

A third, less explored component of the Boston Gun Project that the SACSI sites attempted to replicate is *capacity.*[18] Some might say that the "stars lined up" throughout the implementation of the Boston Gun Project. An innovative, high-performing unit within the Boston Police Department, a progressive probation and parole agency, creative and connected gang outreach workers, and a highly capable, collaborative, and politically savvy U.S. Attorney and an elected District Attorney came together with a talented researcher to reduce youth violence. Their efforts were augmented and legitimized by a progressive clergy that was just becoming organized and vocal. The SACSI sites sought to reproduce this collection of individual and collective capacity in their projects.

SACSI was funded in five cities in 1998 (Indianapolis, Indiana; Memphis, Tennessee; New Haven, Connecticut; Portland, Oregon; and Winston-Salem, North Carolina) and five additional cities in 2000 (Albuquerque, New Mexico; Atlanta, Georgia; Detroit, Michigan; Rochester, New York; and St. Louis, Missouri).[19] SACSI, which relied on the leadership of the U.S. Attorney's Office, supported a U.S. Attorney's Office project coordinator and independent research partner for 2 years and offered technical assistance, site cluster meetings, and training opportunities.[20] A cross-site assessment team was also funded to examine the implementation and importance of the SACSI model in achieving crime reduction.[21]

The approach used in Boston and replicated in SACSI will be taken from pilot project to full implementation with the Department of Justice's Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative.[22] Launched in January 2002, this initiative will use SACSI's data-driven problem-solving approach to reduce gun violence in all 94 Federal districts.

The SACSI model

The model that emerged from the Boston Gun Project and the SACSI initiative involves the following steps:

- Develop a strategic partnership.
- Select a target problem.

- Use research and information to assess the specific nature and dynamics of the targeted problem.
- Describe the problem in a way that points to an effective intervention.

- Design an intervention to have a substantial near-term effect on the targeted crime problem.
- Implement, evaluate, and modify the intervention.

David Kennedy, chief architect of the Boston Gun Project and key participant in the SACSI replication, points out that it may be useful to think of these six steps as three groups of two steps, full of loops and repetitions.[23] For example, the partnership formed would influence the choice of problem, while the choice of problem could further modify the membership in the partnership. Research and research findings on the problem would have a particularly powerful influence on how the problem came to be understood, while the gradual refinement of the problem description would, in turn, influence continuing research and analytic activities. The design of the intervention would strongly influence implementation and evaluation activities, while the experience and insight that came with

implementation and evaluation would lead to changes in the intervention design.[24] There was also significant interaction among the pairs of steps. For example, research and information often influenced problem selection, and so on.

The SACSI model is not unique. With few modifications it has been taught in strategic planning seminars and business courses for decades. It is consistent with the problem-oriented policing model and many other problem-solving approaches. Even so, the SACSI model is exceptional in a number of important ways. First, SACSI relied on research and researchers to help the working group understand the city's violence problems, develop interventions to address violence, and evaluate the effectiveness of those interventions. This may seem superficial, but few problem-solving efforts with law enforcement involve trained researchers working in partnership with practitioners to address problems.

Second, SACSI focused on relatively narrowly defined problems. Working groups may have come to the table talking about "youth violence" or "the drug problem," but research and researchers helped refine the problems as "violence among groups of chronic offenders" or as "drug-house robbery-assassinations."

Third, SACSI sought to develop innovative interventions promising large and relatively rapid results. The Department of Justice allowed as much time as each site deemed necessary (within reason) to form partnerships, develop capacity and trust, understand the violence problem, and design interventions. However, the Justice Department insisted on a relatively short time horizon for results, approximately 12–18 months. The clock started the day SACSI interventions were implemented. This meant that SACSI sites could not focus on long-term interventions, such as youth empowerment

or neighborhood renewal. This was a bold and nonconformist principle that the Justice Department sought to uphold as part of SACSI. While it was politically difficult to stand by, the rule absolutely forced the SACSI sites to consider interventions that were strategic, that sought to make small, but significant changes in the context or dynamics of violence, in ways that promised a relatively quick and large impact. It appears that the Justice Department was right in holding this principle, as most local problem-solving conditions do not allow interventions with long time horizons (more than 2 years).

There are two less obvious distinctions of SACSI. First, SACSI, at its core, is a prevention effort, but not in the way that is typically envisioned in crime-prevention circles. Because it explicitly sought to prevent and reduce violence in the near-term, typical prevention interventions aimed at root causes (such as racism, poverty, addiction, or fundamental neighborhood conditions) were not considered viable. On the contrary, SACSI attempted to design interventions that were preventive primarily through the exercise of criminal justice authority. SACSI wanted to facilitate fundamental improvements in the community by creating a firebreak—reducing the violence and fear first—so that community institutions could begin to function better.[25]

Another unique feature of SACSI is that it explicitly sought interventions that interrupt the dynamics driving violence. In many of the SACSI cities, young men living in high-crime neighborhoods regularly fear being shot; thus they carry and use guns; and thus they regularly fear being shot.[26] SACSI interventions attempted to alter this dynamic and produce situations in which these same young men did not regularly fear being shot.[27] Similarly, in some SACSI cities, drug houses were regularly opened and operated at relatively low risk for some time. These houses almost invariably became busy or

"hot," placing them at high risk for robbery (which frequently includes violence) or arrest and closure by the police. Again, SACSI interventions sought to alter the dynamic by keeping drug houses from becoming hot. Thus, SACSI sites looked for small changes in the dynamics of the problem that would result in large changes in the outcomes. In essence, SACSI sites were trying to exploit tipping points. [28] (The phrase "tipping point" refers to the concept that small changes will have little or no effect on a system or problem until a critical point is reached. Then, even a small change "tips" the system and results in a dramatic change.)

The attempt to change the context or dynamics of violence sometimes led to interventions that seem counterintuitive or perverse when offered to traditional agencies or when compared to traditional approaches. For example, in Boston, the police and others knew that gangs were selling drugs, yet they decided to do nothing about this behavior unless those gangs engaged in violence. Perhaps more extreme, in the case of drug-house robberies and assassinations, the strategy of keeping drug houses from getting hot essentially protects drug houses from robbery, and thus from violence. This strategy does not try to shut down every drug house or arrest every drug dealer; it seeks to make the business of drug sales safer. These strategies were often initially difficult to sell to traditional agencies because even though they reduce the dynamics of violence, they leave problems like widespread drug dealing relatively untouched.[29]

Selecting a problem

> *Memphis*—U.S. Attorney Veronica Coleman knew the problem in Memphis was youth gun violence. She and her partners focused on this problem until the police incident data showed that Memphis consistently reported the highest rates in the Nation for sexual assault. The information was persuasive: The working group

> decided they didn't want Memphis to be known as the "rape capital of the world" and decided to focus their efforts on sexual assault.[30]
>
> *Portland, Oregon*—Before the SACSI project even began, the Mayor announced that homicides, in particular gang-involved homicides, were the problem to focus on in Portland. Some members of the Department of Justice team insisted that the data did not suggest that this problem was serious enough to be an appropriate focus for Portland. The Portland team contended that several recent high-profile slayings indicated that there was a problem and, perhaps more important, that such violence scared the Portland community. The Portland team eventually won the debate and focused on serious gang-involved homicide, but not without much time lost arguing the issue of whether data, politics, or public perceptions should drive the process of selecting the target problem.[31]
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> *Rochester, New York*—Rochester had the highest homicide rate in the State. With little debate, the working group decided that the problem to address was homicide. However, the community's concerns did not align with the working group's. Even in the most affected communities, the residents refused to acknowledge the homicide problem, insisting that drug dealing was the city's most serious problem. The working group continued to focus on homicides and was surprised when the police chief, who felt he needed to respond to community concerns, publicly changed the focus of the department to the drug problem. This change sidetracked the SACSI activities for some time; in retrospect, the critical problem may have been selected too quickly.[32]

The first five SACSI sites were unbounded when it came to problem selection. After significant debate about whether the selected problems had to be justified by the data, the Department of Justice established no protocol for selecting a problem. Likewise, there was no general agreement among the sites or the Department about whether problems indicated by crime rates or by political and community concerns should take priority. Nor was there any consensus about how to use research and analysis when selecting a problem.

The sites selected problems in various ways. Some simply added the SACSI process to an existing working group and an existing problem. Some convened groups of local law enforcement personnel who decided what problem was most serious. Four of the first five sites gravitated toward youth-involved gun violence. Memphis, however,

chose sexual assault, which police incident data showed to be uncommonly high in the city.

The second five SACSI sites, because of the way they were funded, already had a broad problem chosen for them: gun violence.[33] The Department of Justice was expansive in its interpretation of gun violence, including domestic violence, youth violence, robbery, assault, and homicide. Because the essence of the problem had already been selected for these sites, there was very little conversation or debate about problem selection—a situation that sometimes led to a lack of focus in the new sites. The experience of the 10 SACSI sites suggests that some discussion (and a decision) about problem selection is important to the focus and success of the initiative.

The questions to consider when selecting a problem include the following:

- Do the data suggest that this is a problem?
- Would the working group be satisfied if the problem was solved or considerably improved?
- Would the community notice?
- Would the community likely support the working group's efforts?
- Can the organizations at the table expect to affect this problem?
- Do they want to?

Ideally, the answer to all of these questions would be "yes." However, sometimes this was not the case (as suggested in the examples from Portland and Rochester) and the working groups needed to bridge gaps and address deficiencies through the problem-solving process.

Developing an effective partnership

> *Boston*—"The room is packed to overflowing. There are two sets [of people]. One, mostly seated around the conference table, mostly a bit older, mostly white, is law enforcement. They are used to being together; they have been meeting regularly in this room for almost two years. With them, making today a little special, is Donald Stern, the United States Attorney for the District of

> Massachusetts, who has not been in this room before. There are about a dozen of them. The other set, mostly around the periphery of the room, is mostly younger, and much less white. They are streetworkers, gang outreach specialists employed by the city of Boston. There are about two dozen of them. The room is civil but charged. The men and women at the table have, over the last months, orchestrated elaborate law enforcement operations against several of the city's most violent street gangs."[34]

This description of a Boston Gun Project working group meeting is illustrative of many of the SACSI site working groups. It included key leaders, key law enforcement personnel, researchers (who authored the text above), and critical community connectors. The one thing everyone in the room tended to have in common was that they had knowledge of, and connections to, the violence problem in Boston. Perhaps most important, the passage above depicts the challenges of bringing together law enforcement (especially Federal law enforcement) and communities of color into the same room to work on a problem as charged as urban violence. At many points in the SACSI process, working group meetings could be described as "charged," "tense," and "divided." While the potential for these descriptions never went away, with time and hard work, successful SACSI working groups built trust and respect and found ways to work together on violence in their community.

The experience of the Boston Gun Project and the SACSI sites suggests that developing effective partnerships and sustaining them over time is an ongoing challenge. Key issues in developing partnerships included membership, partnership structure, leadership, project management, and sustainment. Three especially important and difficult issues in the SACSI sites were (1) how to establish a balanced team, with both high-level leadership and line-level law enforcement knowledge and expertise, as well as

solid management; (2) whether and how to involve the community; and (3) how to develop effective researcher-practitioner partnerships.

Establishing the team

Almost as important as deciding whom to include as partners is how and when to invite them to join, how large the partnership should be, and at what organizational level (leaders or line-practitioners) the partnership operates. Race, gender, and culture were also considered important to the SACSI sites as they developed the composition of their working groups. Though largely un-discussed, it was clear that the predominately white working groups needed to include communities of color in their efforts if they were going to be successful and viewed as legitimate in the communities most affected by violence.

At the end of two years of working together, the SACSI sites identified the following partners as most critical to the success of their problem-solving efforts: U.S. Attorney's Office, police departments, research partners, district attorney's offices, probation and parole agencies, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF). Most SACSI sites also mentioned a community-based organization or representatives of the clergy as critical to their success. Other possible partners included the Department of Corrections, Federal agencies (such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Drug Enforcement Agency, Marshal Service, Immigration and Naturalization Services, and U.S. Forest Service), school district police, the public housing authority, and the Office of the Mayor.

The consensus that emerged obscures the variation in team memberships and organization. At the beginning of the SACSI initiative, participation ranged from a small

team consisting of a core of law enforcement and criminal justice officials without social service and community participation (as in New Haven) to a large team comprised of officials and leaders from law enforcement, criminal justice, social service, and community-based organizations (as in Portland).

Which partnership structure was more successful? This question has no easy answer. Partnerships that started small and were relatively homogenous seemed more mobile and quicker to make key decisions. Small groups of law enforcement officials were more likely to trust one another and were more likely to share—and be legally permitted to share—sensitive information. However, these smaller partnerships sometimes lacked the diversity of opinions, approaches, and perspectives that characterized larger groups with more nontraditional partners. Also, larger groups may have been better protected from negative community, media, or political reactions.

Several SACSI sites created a hybrid of these two approaches. They started with a working group made up primarily of law enforcement and criminal justice representatives. The working group remained small until the team had a detailed understanding of the crime problem they were targeting. At that point, the group presented their findings to community and clergy groups and social service agencies, some of whom were subsequently included in the partnership and involved in shaping and implementing the strategies that followed. Waiting until the initial problem identification and analysis were complete before involving these community partners allowed the working groups to identify the affected communities and right groups to involve.

Most of the sites also experienced turnover and reductions in partnership size.

Although all of the sites experienced turnover of key *individual* partners, most of the core partner *organizations* stayed involved over the long term and reported that the partnership worked better than prior collaborations. Partners were apparently motivated to stick with the group because the collaboration itself was valuable.[35] Even if the outcome of the interventions was not positive, they reported the information sharing and the collaboration itself were worth the effort. In addition, others reported staying involved because of the seriousness of the problem targeted (e.g., homicide, firearms violence) and the understanding that affecting the problem required a long-term commitment. Others suggested that SACSI meetings were the "place to be"[36]: They were attended by important and committed people and important issues were discussed. This suggests that the high-profile and enduring nature of the SACSI project and partnerships positively influenced the participation of key members.

Leadership. One of the most important dimensions of SACSI partnerships is leadership. By design, the U.S. Attorney's Office played a significant role in leading the SACSI partnerships. As the highest ranking law enforcement officer in the community, most U.S. Attorneys served the SACSI partnerships as a powerful convener of local law enforcement groups. In addition, because the U.S. Attorney's Office frequently enjoyed a distance from everyday local law enforcement business that most police departments, district attorneys offices, and even mayor's offices cannot claim, the U.S. Attorney was sometimes seen as more neutral in local law enforcement circles. The U.S. Attorney's leadership helped bring local law enforcement leaders to SACSI partnerships with an open mind. This stands in contrast to the experience of other SACSI sites that suggests

that problem-solving partnerships often fall apart, or never come together, in the absence of a powerful convener.

SACSI partnership teams consisted primarily of individuals who are leaders in their respective organizations (e.g., U.S. Attorneys, police chiefs, deputy chiefs, district attorneys, senior probation officials, agency directors, deputy mayors), creating a strong potential for conflict over leadership. However, this was rarely the case in the SACSI sites, where leadership tended to be fluid and dynamic. While the U.S. Attorney began as the key leader who convened the partnership, the research partner frequently assumed the leadership reins during the problem-analysis and measurement stages of the process, and the front-line agencies (usually the police department) usually provided key leadership during the implementation stage of the process. This give-and-take in group leadership requires mutual trust and respect among SACSI partners, often developed over a long time.

Decisionmaking in the SACSI partnerships also reflected this fluid form of leadership; it took place most often by consensus. Key decisions (e.g., those regarding action priorities, scheduling of events, allocation of resources) rarely came to a vote or required a mandate from the group leaders. This was most likely the case because stakeholders were not forced to the table. If the decisions of the group were unacceptable to the police department, for example, the police could leave the room and never come back. Therefore, the success of the initiative depended upon crafting mutually agreeable solutions.

The power of including front-line practitioners in the partnership. Successful SACSI partnerships used knowledge and information gleaned from nontraditional sources. Typically, police chiefs and heads of probation and parole agencies are asked about their most serious crime problems. Officers who are out on the streets every day are rarely asked these same questions. The experiences of Boston and the SACSI sites indicate this is a glaring omission. Front-line practitioners are uniquely immersed in the problem and their knowledge is essential to understanding the dynamics of targeted crime problems. While others may have a solid understanding of the outlines of a problem (e.g., they may know there is a gang component to the violence problem), front-line practitioners typically know the contours and vital details of the problem (e.g., they know who the gang leaders are, which gangs are most violent, and which are currently feuding). To balance the need for leadership and the need for front-line practitioner knowledge, some sites established a working group with two levels—one with management representatives who met every 6 weeks or so, and one with line-level representatives who met more frequently. Line-level practitioners alone are insufficient to support problem-solving efforts, as are leaders alone. Both levels of participation are needed.

Management. The lessons from the SACSI sites suggest that a full-time project director responsible for the hands-on management of problem-solving efforts is critical to success and sustainment. This critical team member managed the daily process, facilitated the conversation, moved the group toward the collective goal, ensured that different components of the partnerships worked effectively, coordinated and often documented the various interventions developed, held the group to task, and worked with the research

partner to think through the nexus of operational capacities, local data analysis, and crime control theory. The SACSI sites taught us that a successful project director balances the managerial need to keep the project on task while building the capacity of the other partners to shoulder essential tasks and responsibilities. Problem-solving partnerships often fall apart, or never come together, in the absence of effective project management, showing that strong management is as important as effective leadership.

The SACSI sites seemed to learn lessons from the Boston Gun Project in this regard. The incredible success in Boston left the working group with very little obvious work to do together. There were almost no youth homicides or violent incidents that needed their attention. Given this, the working group naturally moved on to other priorities and the intensity and consistency of the Boston Gun Project working group dissipated, while violent incidents and homicides slowly began to reemerge. The SACSI sites watched this happen to the Boston Gun Project and seemed determined to keep their working groups together. All institutionalized their process in different ways, and nearly four years later the SACSI working groups are still operating, keeping a pulse on the violence problem in their cities. Put simply, a locus of responsibility is critical to developing and sustaining interagency problem-solving partnerships.

Are community partners necessary?

The partners in the SACSI sites debated a great deal about the necessity and importance of involving the "community" in problem-solving efforts. The community partners included residents, community-based organizations, clergy, former offenders, and social service providers. Some SACSI participants argue that the work of the Ten-

Point Coalition or gang outreach workers in Boston or Indianapolis played a major role in reducing crime in those cities. Other participants consider their role to be less critical, and even potentially disruptive to sharing information and developing trust within the partnership. It seems that both views are right.

The experience of the SACSI sites suggests that the "community" as a whole is not particularly helpful. Many community members have their own agendas and have trouble thinking beyond those agendas. If they think the problem is drugs or poverty when they go into a meeting, then—no matter how convincing the data—they will probably think the problem is drugs or poverty when they come out of the meeting. One neighborhood group, after a presentation of the concentration of violence in their neighborhood, refused to see this violence as reality and would not admit that their kids were killing and being killed on the streets. Despite the facts, this group maintained that vacant housing lots were the problem. Such episodes created much frustration for some of the SACSI working groups.

Involving the Community: Questions To Consider

- Can they provide information or perspectives not contained elsewhere in the partnership?
- Is their buy-in critical to tempering community disapproval for law enforcement strategies included as part of the initiative?
- Do they have a unique connection with the offender population?
- Are they likely to put limits on the trust that can be developed within the group?
- What issues are presented to the functioning of the partnership if law enforcement information needs to be shared when these individuals/groups are present?

Even so, the SACSI sites' experience suggests that certain individuals or groups within the community are essential to success. Certain community members can provide valuable information or perspectives not found elsewhere in the partnership. In the SACSI sites, the community has helped the working group craft more effective law enforcement approaches and has tempered disapproval of law enforcement strategies that may be part of the initiative. Standing shoulder-to-shoulder with certain community

members has provided an umbrella of legitimacy for law enforcement in some of the SACSI sites. Perhaps most important, some community members have a unique connection with the offender population—one that cannot easily be achieved by law enforcement officers. Thus, SACSI sites worked through community meetings to present what they learned about violence, seek possible solutions to the violence problem, and connect with those individuals or groups who understood what they were trying to do and who could contribute to the problem-solving effort.

Even after identifying those special individuals or groups, SACSI sites that involved community members in their partnerships had to work with care. At times, mixed participation (law enforcement and community) limited trust in the working group. Law enforcement, for good reason, was at times unwilling or legally prohibited to share what they might in a law enforcement-only session. Such issues as confidentiality, tactical security, and legal restrictions had to take priority. Likewise, community groups occasionally felt that their sharing might compromise the offenders about whom they had information. The working groups had to be careful not to mix law enforcement and community in information-sharing sessions; SACSI sites often did not include the community until the basic understanding of the violence problem had been developed. In sum, most SACSI sites included the participation of (and were more effective because of) certain individuals or community groups as partners in violence-reduction efforts.

The importance of research partners

Research partners played many important roles in the SACSI partnerships. First, they brought data and information together in a way individual agencies could not.

Research partners also applied other methods of obtaining information (such as interviews and focus groups) to problem-solving efforts. They frequently analyzed and displayed information in ways practitioners had not considered, changing the way the problem was understood. Many of the research partners brought a theoretical structure to the problem-solving activities. They helped the working group develop interventions that were measurable, and they actually measured the effectiveness of applied interventions. In short, research partners helped the SACSI working groups develop the fullest possible understanding of the targeted violence problem, develop strategies uniquely responsive to opportunities presented by the data, and measure the effectiveness of those strategies.

In addition to these qualities and skills, research partners were inherently outside the world of law enforcement operations. They tended to be highly respected in the community, as well as among practitioners and policymakers. Their training and their title gave their voice weight with senior leaders. For example, one SACSI research partner noticed that a small specialized unit of the police department had developed an effective approach for reaching the target population. This unit did not know it was doing anything innovative, and it was way below the radar screen of the police leadership. The research partner identified this approach, assessed its use in the broader problem-solving effort, and presented its potential to leadership; the unit's method was more widely implemented. As people with no stake in the local law enforcement political and bureaucratic machinery, research partners had a distance and a credibility that allowed them to view the efforts of the organization in a broader context and to validate officers' work to policymakers in a way that other working group members could not.

SACSI researchers often played key leadership and facilitation roles, guiding the working groups through the problem analysis, intervention development, and measurement stages of the SACSI process. In the best circumstances, the contributions of the research partner fundamentally changed the way the working group understood the violence problem, allowing the team to develop interventions that altered the context and dynamics of the problem, leading to significant reductions in violence.

However, not all SACSI experiences resulted in successful research-practitioner partnerships. In some sites, research and research partners contributed too little; in others, practitioners expected too much. A few research teams never got mobilized and failed to examine the most elementary information on their city's problems. Others clearly had no previous relationship, and were not interested in developing new relationships with large, often unfriendly institutions like the police department or the courts. Some were not comfortable spending large amounts of time with practitioners. Others did not seem to believe that operational data from practitioners or offender interviews were scientific enough or at all useful in understanding problems. Some were not prepared to provide research in a timeframe that would help the problem-solving process. Others seemed unable to provide research that was useful in the problem-solving process, sometimes losing credibility with their working groups when they presented obscure findings. Finally, some were concerned that this project would not help them professionally, since the research was unlikely to yield material for journal articles.

At the same time, some practitioners expected nothing short of magic from their research partner, thinking the researcher could simply look at the numbers and make the violence problem disappear. Some practitioners expected research findings on an

unreasonable timeline. Others never overcame the resistance to share data, leaving their research partner with little official data to examine and greatly reducing the effectiveness of the research efforts. Some initially questioned their research partners' approaches—for example, "Why were so many ride-alongs with police necessary?"—only to be pleasantly surprised by the dividends this research paid.[37] At some point in the project, nearly all of the research-practitioner partnerships could have been described by one of the scenarios above. Such situations were probably only natural for researchers and practitioners serving in new roles. However, more than one of the research-practitioner partnerships became paralyzed, suggesting that, consistent with the literature on research-practitioner partnerships, the SACSI partnerships were not natural alliances and turned out to be much trickier than many expected at the onset.[38]

Understanding the targeted violence problem

> *New Haven*—Law enforcement knew that they had put an end to organized gangs in their city. What they didn't know, and what research showed, was that a strong pattern of gun crime was emerging from small and informal groups of neighborhood-based offenders. Once understood, this widely disregarded group dynamic gave the working group a foothold for action.
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> *Winston-Salem*—Practitioners knew that a small number of juveniles (research showed this to be approximately 1 percent of all juveniles in the city) were responsible for most of the serious violence in their city. They also knew that these offenders had extensive criminal records. Police officers and clergy knew it from years working the streets. But what none of them realized until the data were presented was that older offenders were using juveniles to commit increasingly serious crimes. This finding helped the working group develop a new way of addressing violence in Winston-Salem. The message to offenders became: "Stop the violence. Put down your guns. Don't involve kids in crime."
>
> *Albuquerque*—The working group knew the city's violence problem was different from that in East Coast cities. The violence seemed more dispersed, less patterned. When the team realized that victims lived more than 5 miles from where they were getting murdered and that suspects/offenders traveled about the same distance to commit these murders, the team knew they had to change the

way they were thinking about and preventing violence. The results had immediate implications for the way the police were patrolling the city.

The vignettes above illustrate the most important and exciting turning point of SACSI partnerships: when a simple research finding or moment of truth changes the way the working group understands the violence problem. These moments were rare, but critical events that energized the partnership and changed their understanding of the problem and the course of their activities overnight. SACSI research partners and working group members began seeking these moments, suggesting that SACSI was not about compiling and analyzing enormous amounts of data, but more about searching for the one piece of data or information that could change the way the problem was understood. When this happened, that strategies that followed were fairly straightforward.

The quest for breakthrough moments often began with a review of the formal crime and community safety data and usually progressed to include interviews, focus groups, and incident reviews. A closer look at two sites—Indianapolis, Indiana, and Rochester, New York—illustrates the process.

Indianapolis and its violence problem[39]

Indianapolis is a city with just over 800,000 residents in a metropolitan area of approximately 1.5 million. It has long ranked in the midrange of the Nation's larger cities in crime rates generally, and violent crime in particular. However, during the mid-1990s, Indianapolis experienced a significant increase in homicides, reaching peak levels at 157 in 1997. This doubling of the homicide rate from 10 per 100,000 in 1990 to 20 per 100,000 in 1998 was attributed by local law enforcement to the late arrival of crack

cocaine in this midwestern city. Some thought a gang problem was fueling violence on the streets; others dismissed this idea.

The working group used existing information systems (police incident reports, crime mapping, court records) to analyze Indianapolis homicides. The 1997 and 1998 homicide profiles looked similar to those in most urban areas of the Nation. They involved young men using firearms and were concentrated in certain geographic areas. Many of the victims and suspects had similar personal characteristics (age, race, and gender), and many had prior involvement in the criminal justice system. The most common age for victims was 28; suspects were younger, peaking from ages 17 to 26, with a median age of 23. Nearly 80 percent of victims were male; more than 80 percent of suspects were male. Two-thirds of victims and 72 percent of suspects were African-American. Both homicide victims and suspects tended to have criminal records. At least 63 percent of the victims and 75 percent of the suspects had either an adult or juvenile criminal record. Firearms were used in about 75 percent of the homicides.

Crime mapping (using geographic information systems, or GIS) indicated that homicides were concentrated in particular neighborhoods in three of the five Indianapolis Police Department districts. The specific police beats tended to be the same ones with the most violent crime and the ones receiving the most citizen complaints about drug activity.

The analysis of official crime reports helped paint a picture of the overall patterns, but the picture was not detailed enough to craft interventions. For example, the official reports indicated that very few homicides involved either gangs (one in 1998) or drugs (six in 1997, seven in 1998).[40] Yet investigators and line-level officers strongly suspected that gangs and drugs were involved in many, perhaps most, homicides.

To get a detailed picture of homicides, the Indianapolis working group decided to follow the approach taken in Boston and Minneapolis: They brought together law enforcement officials, people having street-level intelligence on homicides and violence, to examine every homicide that occurred in 1997. Participants included detectives and officers from the Indianapolis Police Department and Marion County Sheriff's Department, prosecutors, probation officers, corrections officials, and Federal law enforcement (approximately 75 representatives from 10 agencies). The intent was to move beyond the basic data available in official records and tap into the extensive knowledge of the professionals working these cases and areas of the city. Specifically, the working group wanted information about motives and events leading up to each homicide, networks of chronic offenders involved in homicides, and whether and how homicides were related to drug use and distribution.

Probing Questions for the Incident Review

- Do you know anything about this case?
- What do you know about the victim?
- What do you know about any associates of the victim?
- Was the victim part of a group of active offenders?
- What do you know about the suspect(s)?
- What do you know about associates of the suspect(s)?
- Was the suspect(s) part of a group of active offenders?
- What do you know about the relationship between victim and suspect(s)?
- What do you know about the location of the event?

The incident review revealed that approximately 60 percent of the homicides involved suspects or victims who were described as being part of a group of known chronic offenders or loosely organized gangs. Through this process, the working group learned who was in a gang, which gangs were prone to use violence, and which gangs were fighting with one another. Additionally the incident review suggested that more than half the homicides had some type of drug connection involving known users and dealers, as well as incidents tied to drug sales, retaliations, and drug turf battles. The incident review allowed the working group to sort out incidents involving drug dealers or

drug users from drug-related gang retaliations and drug turf battles. The working group, armed with a problem analysis that enabled them to consider interventions, decided to concentrate their efforts on ongoing disputes among gangs and groups involved in drug sales.

Rochester and its violence problem[41]

Rochester, New York, is a city of about 217,000 people with a metropolitan area of just under 1.1 million. The metropolitan area has grown over the past 30 years, but the city itself has lost over one-third of its population since its peak in 1950. While relatively small in absolute numbers, Rochester's homicide rate is the highest in the State—higher than New York City's, 30 percent higher than Buffalo's, and nearly 60 percent higher than that in Syracuse or Albany.

After reviewing the official data, the Rochester working group found the same general pattern as in Indianapolis and other U.S. cities. Homicides involved young African-American men using firearms in concentrated geographic areas, and many of the victims and suspects had extensive criminal histories. As in Indianapolis, the review of the official records was helpful in understanding basic crime patterns, but it left the Rochester SACSI team with little idea of how to reduce homicides. Much of what the analysis of the official records revealed was already widely known by both the police and the general public. It was also clear that interventions already under way in this city were not having the desired effect.

The Rochester team decided that a homicide incident review would help specify the problem.[42] As in Indianapolis, the Rochester team wanted to develop a deeper

understanding of the motives behind the murders and to see if there were patterns or individuals associated with multiple events that could lead to intervention strategies. The review of all homicides in 2000 proved to be effective. It highlighted motives, weapons, and even individuals common across cases. Analysis of the data gained from the incident review revealed three types of murder in Rochester:

• A small portion (13 percent) involved people who simply found themselves at the wrong place at the wrong time.

• Of the remaining homicides, about half involved festering disputes and arguments (50 percent of which lasted for 10 days or longer).

• About half involved murder associated with illegal business (almost all drug sales, robberies, or robbery-assassinations).

The homicide review also revealed that 40 percent of *all* the homicides involved more than one offender. The consensus of the working group was that these were not highly organized gangs, but rather small groups of friends involved in drug-related disputes and drug robbery-assassinations.

Before proceeding to interventions, the working group wanted to know more about the nature and frequency of disputes on the street, as well as additional information about the genesis and dynamics of drug houses and drug-house robberies. This led SACSI researchers to the Monroe County correctional facility, where they conducted lengthy focus groups with inmates. The focus groups yielded valuable insights into the criminal lifestyle in Rochester. On the whole, the focus group members felt they lived in a very dangerous world. They believed they could run into conflicts anywhere and that

most people in their neighborhoods had experienced or were experiencing serious conflicts with others.

Furthermore, they believed that weapons carrying and violence were common in their neighborhoods. They talked about "flash and respect" and reported that wearing expensive clothing or jewelry in their neighborhood may lead to envy by other young men. "Too much flash" seemed to be at the root of many conflicts and drug robberies. In addition to providing invaluable insights into the criminal lifestyle, the focus group also provided important information about (1) the extent, supply, and reasons for gun carrying, suggesting that several corner stores were well known (both in the neighborhood and by police) to supply weapons; (2) the frequency, nature, and causes of disputes, suggesting that flash and respect are at the core of many disputes and that disputes go on for some time and are known about by many in the community; and (3) the history, operations, and dynamics of drug houses and drug-house robberies. (See "Strategies Pursued" for more information on drug-house robberies.)

Furthermore, the focus groups provided insights into (1) the perceptions of the effectiveness of current law enforcement actions, suggesting that the police were very effective in arresting drug dealers and shutting down drug houses; (2) ongoing prosecution strategies, such as Project Exile, suggesting that this program may deter only amateur offenders and that it is not credible in its proclamations about certainty and severity of punishment; and (3) the level of intrusion and effect on their lifestyle of sanctions, suggesting that probation is the least desired, most intrusive sanction law enforcement can offer. After these focus groups, the Rochester SACSI group concluded that it had enough information to start thinking about strategies.

Observations about the problem-specification process

The precise nature and flow of the problem-specification process was unique to each of the SACSI sites. However, several generalizations can be made. First, the partnerships had to overcome significant hurdles to sharing data. Some partners routinely resisted sharing information and providing data. Resistance was both obvious and covert. Resisting the process showed itself most prominently in the data collection and analysis phase of the project, putting research partners in the awkward position of trying to mend and build the partnership.

Second, targeted crime problems were not necessarily what they seemed at first glance. On the surface, Indianapolis and Rochester (and many other cities) described their violence problem similarly. After a much closer look, it became clear that the gang and drug-market dynamics were very different in different communities, and the reasons behind the homicides were not the same. Indianapolis had semi-organized gangs engaged in drug turf battles; Rochester had drug-house robberies and retaliatory disputes among individuals and groups.

Third, the problem-specification process needed both researchers and practitioners to be most effective. Researchers (or analysts) were needed to help frame inquiries and do the digging; practitioners brought critical interpretive insights and front-line information to the table. Both were critical to asking further questions of the data and to coming up with a reasoned understanding of what the information the researchers compiled meant, framed in a way that permitted solutions to be crafted.

Fourth, the process demonstrated the importance of qualitative and nontraditional data sources. Official data were critical to outlining the problems, but systematic questioning of line practitioners, community groups, outreach workers, and even offenders proved much more revealing of the motives and nature of the events, the underlying patterns where opportunities for intervention were to be found. Finally, once the team was satisfied with the problem-specification process, it had to define the problem in very specific terms and had to define the intervention goals clearly and succinctly. This was not easy, and doing it as a team was critical to keeping the focus of the initiative over the long term as the partnership developed and implemented a strategy.

Developing a strategy

Many of the SACSI sites struggled to move from specifying the problem to developing an intervention strategy. In some sites, it may have been difficult to develop a strategy because of an insufficient understanding of the problem, suggesting that the working group needed to continue gathering and analyzing data in search of a defining moment.

Others may have lacked leadership at a pivotal time. Who should lead the strategy development process was a difficult issue in the SACSI sites. Unlike other stages in the problem-solving process, where it was more or less clear who the leader should be (e.g., the research partner in the analysis stage), nobody owned the strategy development process. At different SACSI sites, the U.S. Attorney, the project director, the research partner, or the police captain led this process. If leaders did not emerge during this stage, the projects faced stagnation.

Reflecting on the Boston experience, David Kennedy urges patience, frequently reminding the SACSI sites that the types of problems likely to be addressed by sustained, large-scale, problem-solving exercises are typically difficult ones—otherwise, lesser efforts would have been sufficient to deal with them. The Boston Gun Project working group spent more than a year designing Operation Ceasefire; the SACSI sites took at least that long to design and implement their strategies. Throughout the long process, the project director must keep the working group moving forward productively, meeting regularly, brainstorming, and sifting through potential interventions.

Kennedy's decision criteria[43]

While no series of lessons can tell you how to be innovative or how to solve the targeted crime problem, the Boston and the SACSI experiences outline a process for developing strategy. They also offer effective ways of deciding whether the suggested solutions and tactics will meet their goals.

The SACSI working groups presented their problem analysis to community groups, line-level officers, social service agencies, and affected neighborhoods and solicited solutions. Most also looked at similar problems in other communities and considered ways to apply criminological theory and practice to identify possible solutions to the problem.

The resulting possible solutions and types of interventions seemed endless. Common suggestions included:

• Reducing poverty in high-crime neighborhoods.

• Eradicating drug demand.

• Prosecuting all illegal gun carriers in Federal courts.

• Empowering youth.

• Offering parenting classes.

• Supporting antigang programs in the schools.

All of these solutions were plausible in many of the SACSI communities. Reducing poverty and other root causes in high-crime areas would likely have an effect on violence in those neighborhoods. Eradicating drug demand would likely eliminate drug markets and the violence associated with them. Federally prosecuting all gun carriers would likely remove many potentially violent offenders from the community. And empowering youth, offering parenting classes, and supporting positive training in schools might lead to healthier and less violent at-risk kids. But these solutions were too broad to be useful.

To narrow down the possible solutions, the SACSI sites applied the criteria developed by David Kennedy and discussed in SACSI cluster meetings to each one of the proposed interventions.

These criteria have come to be known as "Kennedy's Rules":

1. How big of an impact can we anticipate?

2. How long will it take?

3. Can we do it?

4. Do we want to?

The first question requires the working group to consider the strategy's potential impact. If the solution cannot plausibly have a large impact on the violence problem, then it is discarded. For example, while offering parenting classes in violent neighborhoods

may lead to more prepared parents and better cared-for children in the target population, it is not likely that this solution would have a significant impact on violence—at least not in the short term. This leads to the second question, "How long will it take?" In the parenting classes example, the answer is, "Too long." This strategy would need at least half a generation to take hold, which is longer than the working group can wait.

The third question, "Can we do it?" requires the working group to assess whether the people in the room have the resources and the influence to implement the solution. In the case of offering parenting classes, the answer is probably "No." This sort of work is really not in the domain of the criminal justice practitioners at the table. The last question, "Do we want to?" requires the SACSI working groups to consider their norms and values and those of the community they represent. Asked about parenting classes, many working groups would answer, "Yes," it would be nice if parents in troubled neighborhoods were given access to parenting classes. However, SACSI working groups tended to be uncomfortable with solutions that were too costly (e.g., mandatory minimum sentences for drug users) or overly broad (e.g., citywide curfew for all kids under 18). As simple as they are, these questions set a very high standard. Most of the tactics suggested by SACSI working groups failed to meet at least one of the four parameters. Two of the above-mentioned examples—eradicating drug demand and federally prosecuting all illegal gun carriers—further illustrate the point.

Eradicating drug demand. If drug demand were eliminated, illegal drug markets and the violence associated with them would dissipate. Thus, this strategy would satisfy

question #1 by having a significant impact on violent crime. All members of the working groups would have happily eradicated drug demand, and many members desperately wanted to do so (passing question #4). However, eradicating drug demand would take decades or more, longer than the working group had to spend (failing question #2) and it was not something the working group had the resources, knowledge, or capacity to accomplish (failing question #3). Thus, this strategy was discarded.

Federal prosecution of all illegal firearms carriers. This was clearly something under the purview of the SACSI working group; however, it was unclear whether the Federal system had the capacity to handle *all* illegal gun carriers (barely satisfying question #3). The potential results of this strategy were likely to be almost immediate (question #2). However, when working groups carefully examined the plausible size of the impact this strategy would have and the amount of resources required to sustain it over any duration, most groups concluded that this tactic was not targeted enough and did not offer enough "bang for the buck" (failing question #1). Furthermore, when working groups considered the desirability of this action, most concluded that Federal hammers should be used judiciously, reserved for those offenders who warrant their use, which probably is not every illegal gun carrier. In addition, SACSI working group members sensed that the community would not support this broad and punitive strategy, particularly if something better could be offered to reach the same results. For these and other reasons, this strategy was not appealing to many SACSI working groups (failing question #4) and was discarded.

The SACSI sites had to keep searching until they found tactics that were both doable and effective in the short run. The tactics that eventually passed the test were enforcement-focused more often than some working groups would have preferred. Thus, some sites developed a parallel track in which longer-term interventions were implemented and assessed.

Strategies Pursued

What approaches satisfied Kennedy's criteria? The next section of this report describes common tactics of the SACSI sites. Before examining these tactics, it is useful to demonstrate the logic of the local strategies chosen and to examine how these strategies related to their problem statements. Indianapolis and Rochester illustrate the point.

Indianapolis. As discussed above, the problem in Indianapolis was a relatively small number of known, chronic offenders engaging in group violence, most of whom had some sort of drug connection (most pervasive was drug-related retaliation, drug rip-offs and drug-turf battles). To address this problem, the working group developed a strategy to deal with (1) offenders with extensive criminal records, (2) the use of firearms in violent crime, and (3) gang- and drug-related violence. For young men with extensive criminal records, three interrelated tactics were used. First, the working group sought to "tighten the system" around serious violent offenders by identifying and increasing the arrest, prosecution, and supervision of these offenders. This was done by developing a list of offenders who met the criteria and informing police, probation, parole, warrant

officers, and local and Federal prosecution agencies of offenders on this list. The goal was to insure that when offenders on the list stepped out of line that their cases were taken seriously. (A more detailed description of "The List" appears below.) For example, if a police officer stopped the car of an offender on the list, the officer's computer would signal the officer that this was a violent individual and caution was needed. The same sort of signal would appear throughout the system, attempting to bring more certainty and severity to these cases.

Second, the working group warned identified offenders of serious consequences for violence through special meetings. This tactic sought to deter offenders (and their associates) from behaving violently and to offer offenders services and legitimate opportunities. The final tactic aimed at serious violent offenders was outreach. The Ten-Point Coalition, a group of local ministers and youth outreach workers, intervened with youth to discourage participation in drug and violent activity and to increase their links to services and opportunities.

The working group also wanted to reduce the use of firearms in violent crime. A Firearms Unit was created to screen all firearms cases and to determine the appropriateness of local or Federal prosecution in order to increase the successful prosecution of offenders using firearms. This unit also sought to close gaps in the firearms permit system that were thought to grant a gun permit to individuals prohibited from possessing firearms.

Finally, the working group wanted to target drug-related gang violence. At first, this was primarily accomplished through publicized investigations of violent drug-selling

gangs - which proved very successful. Over time, the tactics became more focused on gangs, in particular on known drug-involved gangs and groups.

Rochester. Two major problems were identified by the data—homicides related to ongoing disputes and homicides related to drug robberies. Two distinct strategies emerged to deal with these problems. The working group knew that lethal disputes often involved participants with serious criminal histories, that these disputes frequently occurred over time—days, weeks, sometimes months, and that the police and other working group participants had information about active disputes. Given this, the working group designed an intervention to systematically collect and analyze information on disputes and deter, refer, incapacitate, or protect participants in potentially lethal disputes. As in Indianapolis, the Rochester working group's intervention included developing a list of individuals who have a high chance of being involved in violence, either as an offender or victim. They also borrowed the idea of meetings to warn individuals of the risk they were in, inform them of the consequences of violence, and give them access to services.

The working group also knew that killings related to drug robberies were most likely to occur at drug houses that met the following criteria: (1) relatively new, (2) crack houses, (3) extremely busy, and (4) either "open" or without exterior security. They knew that these incidents were most likely to occur in the very late hours of the weekend. With this information, the working group pursued two angles. First, they sought to keep drug houses from getting hot by letting open or busy drug-house operators know that the police were aware of them. They considered sending a letter from the police (or some other mechanism) to warn drug-house operators that they had information that illegal

drugs were being sold from that location and that the police planned on investigating this claim. If the claim was substantiated, the police (and the entire criminal justice system) would make every effort to close the property and prosecute those involved to the fullest extent of the law. The intent of this letter was to warn drug-house operators to slow down, close down, or stop selling to strangers. The second part of the strategy was to identify and aggressively prosecute those individuals involved in drug-house robberies.

Common tactics

SACSI sites rarely settled on a single tactic as the immediate best answer. Rather, they used a variety of integrated tactics (which came together as a single strategy) aimed at identified causes. While every strategy was different, a few tactics were common to many of the sites (and to Boston). Common tactics are described below.

"The list"

> *Indianapolis*—One of the city's most dangerous offenders is pulled over late one evening for a traffic violation. He has a significant record. He is well known by the SACSI working group to be gang-involved and to carry and use firearms. Soon, the officers who pulled him over will know all of this as well. They run the plate number in the computer and the name that comes up is a "VIPER." They know to proceed carefully and know that if there is a case to make against the offender, it will be a priority for the District Attorney and maybe even the U.S. Attorney. VIPERs get the full attention of the justice system in Indianapolis.[44]
>
> *High Point, North Carolina*—Offenders know something is different. In a community of 70,000, it doesn't take long for news to get around. The Federal government is involved in a local task force and is taking action against violent offenders. They have a list of the most violent offenders and they are using it. Soon, offenders started asking how to get their name off the list. The answer is simple, "Don't carry a gun illegally! Don't engage in violence! Don't associate with people who do!"[45]

The goal of "the list" is to identify the most serious, violent offenders in the city and to increase the arrest, prosecution, and incarceration of these violent offenders. The other goal of the list is to eliminate the anonymity of offenders, both to the criminal justice system and the offenders themselves. Identifying the most serious offenders, those responsible for most of the violence, and putting them away or deterring them from using violence will reduce violence and fear on the street. Critical to the success of such lists is how the offenders are identified. Some cities relied solely on criminal history data, and thus sometimes identified older offenders who were not necessarily the most likely to commit homicide. At least two sites used their lists to identify offenders for a meeting only to have the participants assert, "The wrong guys are here. We haven't been into gangs in a long time."[46] Other cities combined criminal history data with a scaled-down monthly version of the incident review process. In incident reviews, practitioners examined recent homicides, as well as other types of incidents (including nonlethal shootings, shots-fired reports, assaults, or robberies) to factor current violent events into developing the list.

Once the list was developed, efforts were made to reduce the anonymity of known violent offenders, increase the monitoring of those who were on probation and parole, and increase the likelihood that arrests of these offenders would lead to prosecution and incarceration. In some sites, part of the effort involved establishing a team that screened all firearms or violence cases to determine the appropriateness of local or Federal prosecution. This strategy is referred to in Richmond and other cities as "Project Exile." Some cities also increased the enforcement of bench warrants and increased probation

and parole scrutiny on individuals on the list. In some communities, the list became something that was feared on the street.

This tactic was not used by all of the SACSI sites. Working groups that did not have strong community support feared being accused of "profiling" if they were to develop or use such a tactic. On the other hand, working groups that were supported by community coalitions stood behind the list as strategic enforcement that sought to focus communities on the "worst of the worst."

Lever-pulling meetings

> *Indianapolis*—The Brightwood neighborhood had long been a homicide and violent-crime hot spot. It had been taken over years before by the "Brightwood Gang," a tightly organized group of individuals working together to distribute crack. This group protected their turf and product with threats and acts of violence. They had assault weapons, semiautomatic handguns, shotguns, pistols, and revolvers. They also committed less serious offenses, such as loitering, using illegal drugs, and drinking in public. They were investigated using wiretaps and long-term surveillance of major players and drug buys. The investigation concluded with the execution of 33 search warrants, the arrest of 16 individuals, and the seizure of 78 firearms, 12 kilograms of powdered cocaine, 500 grams of crack, and over $150,000 in cash. Together, the individuals arrested had over 20 convictions for violent felonies, and nearly 70 convictions for other offenses. This crackdown was the start of a no-violence message that would be communicated to other violent groups in the city of Indianapolis. "You saw what happened to the Brightwood Gang—Who wants to be next?"[47]
>
> *Big City, USA*—Two groups of feuding offenders, 25 in all, are led into the courthouse. They sit and wait, nervously looking at the only available distraction: a list of names lettered in white against a black background. Melvin "Killface" Chatman, age 16, murdered on March 9, 2000; Eric Jenkins, age 18, murdered on April 28, 2000; Soueth "China" Heme, age 19, murdered on June 11, 2000. Name after name on the wall. Then, in the same style, on the opposite wall, offenders—all of whom are known to the participants—and the Federal penalties they received after engaging in violence. Larry Roscoe Gunnell, Jr., convicted, life sentence; Julian Dion "D Train" Kirkland, convicted 20 years; Cornelius "Corn" Woods, convicted, 19 years. After enough time for the message to take effect, the meeting begins. Offenders are told that this is not a sting, that everyone will go home, and that this is not personal—everyone involved in violence in the city will get the same message. One after another, people from the U.S. Attorney's Office,

> the FBI, the ATF, the DEA, the police department, probation and parole, and the District Attorney's Office confront the audience with the power of that agency. The message is clear: Violence will no longer be tolerated. Individuals who engage in violence and their friends will be punished with whatever levers are available, including curfew violations, drinking in public, and loitering. Anything and everything will be done to stop the violence.
>
> The talk is not only about sanctions. Community leaders deliver impassioned speeches. "We are tired of seeing your futures snatched away from you because of violence, guns, disputes. We're the ones who bury you. If you need help, want to go to school, find a job, or get drug treatment for your mom, then we can help you. But if you choose to stay in the violence, to continue to cripple our young people, we will work as hard as we can to get you off our streets."[46] The lever-pulling strategy is based on general deterrence theory and attempts to (1) increase the perception among high-risk individuals that they are likely to face criminal sanctions if they continued to engage in violence, (2) make high-risk individuals aware of and give them access to legitimate opportunities and services, (3) communicate clearly and directly to them, and (4) be credible by following through on the threat of sanctions by "pulling all available levers" when violence occurs and making services and opportunities available as an alternative to criminal activities.[48]

The lever-pulling strategy starts by selecting a narrow target category of illegal behavior (e.g., drug-house robberies in Rochester or adult offenders who involved juveniles in crimes in Winston-Salem). The targeted group then receives a direct and explicit message regarding what kind of behavior will elicit a special response from law enforcement and what that response will be. Then the working group monitors the targeted group and the targeted behavior closely and follows through when individuals or groups step out of line.

When individuals or groups step out of line, the reaction must be immediate and certain. The working group must make good on its word, and pull levers on those who have engaged in violence. Because offenders who engage in violence also engage in many other, less serious crimes (e.g., drinking in public, loitering, possessing and distributing drugs, possessing illegal firearms), it is easy for the working groups to take

action against violent individuals or groups. The working group should then communicate the results of the crackdown with other offenders they are trying to affect.

In other words, the working group should tell the targeted group (for example, Gang B) why members from Gang A are being prosecuted federally for their violent acts and what will happen to members of Gang B if they behave similarly. The primary method for delivering the lever-pulling message in the SACSI sites was a series of forums (or highly formalized meetings) with the target audience. This audience of criminally involved individuals was most commonly identified through a combination of ongoing incident reviews and the use of "the list". Federal and local prosecutors, accompanied by local, state, and Federal law enforcement, explained the sanctions (levers) that would be applied to individuals and groups participating in violence. At the same forum, clergy and community leaders expressed their concerns about violence in the neighborhoods and the number of young men being victimized and incarcerated. Presenters also described available services and support opportunities available from providers and community and clergy participants.

While this was the general format for the forums, the message, messengers, and precise format for the meetings varied across sites. Hand-delivered letters, phone calls to offenders, and well-placed posters may also serve as primary or secondary ways of notifying target offenders of the message. Other cities have used billboards, signs on buses, and radio and television commercials to get their message to offenders. What is critical is not necessarily how the offender is notified, but that the message reaches the right people and that the message is clear, direct, and, most important, credible. If the

working group cannot make good on its threats and promises, the message becomes one more thing on a long list of things that cannot be trusted in an offender's life.

Data from several SACSI sites suggested that the deterrent message is effective. Interviews conducted by researchers in Portland indicated that offenders who participated in notification meetings had strong, unambiguous, and accurate memories of the meetings and the message presented at the meetings.[49] They recalled that the key message was to "stop the violence, or else." Most participants understood the message to mean tougher consequences, such as Federal penalties or longer State prison sentences. More than half the subjects reported that they believed that law enforcement agencies were watching them more closely than before the offender meetings. While 70 percent of the attendees reported that it was "easy" to get a gun illegally, fewer of them reported carrying a gun after the notification meeting. In addition, data from the Indianapolis Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring program suggested that arrestees were aware of the SACSI interventions and believed that law enforcement was more serious about reducing violent incidents.[50]

Home visits

> *Winston-Salem*—Special teams that included police, probation officers, and clergy fanned out in some troubled neighborhoods last night, but they weren't there to seize drugs, chase suspects, or make arrests. Instead, they met with teenagers who have been involved in youth violence, and they walked the streets spreading the message to young people that the violence must (and will) stop.[51]

Another key tactic in the SACSI sites featured unannounced visits to the homes of probationers and parolees by teams of probation officers, police, and (in some cities) clergy representatives. The home visits reinforced the message that the criminal justice community was united and serious about ensuring that targeted offenders did not commit

violent offenses. In addition, some communities used the visits to enforce curfew and other conditions on high-rate offenders. Often these teams met not only with the offender, but also with the offender's family and neighbors to let them know what was going on. Some visits ended with drug tests, but most ended with distribution of resource information and contact sheets for services for offenders and others close to them.

Outreach

> *Winston-Salem*—Operation Reach was just getting on its feet. Probation officers, police, and clergy knew they had the seed of a good idea, despite the fact that the initial movements seemed unnatural. One evening, the team approached the house of a young probationer who was suspected in a recent shooting. The plan was to talk to the family, encourage them to turn their son in to law enforcement, and make sure the boy was not in the house. Unfortunately, not everyone understood the plan in these terms. The probation officer and police officer stormed the house, searching for the suspect. By the time the clergy members reached the door, there was confusion, screaming, and crying. While law enforcement, who after a run through the house felt certain the suspect was not home, waited outside, the clergy comforted the suspect's mother and grandmother. They said, "We know your son knows something about this shooting. If he was part of it, then he needs to come to justice. If he wasn't, we'll stand by you and help work this through with the police. If he stays out there on the streets, we think he'll get hurt. We don't want that to happen." As Reverend John Mendez left the house, he handed the mother his business card.
>
> Only a day or so later, Reverend Mendez received a call from this mother. Her son had come home and they were ready to work this out. The boy and his mother met Reverend Mendez at his church. Reverend Mendez called Chief of Police Linda Davis, who came and safely brought the suspect into custody.[52]

Several sites worked with social service agencies, clergy, and community organizations to reach out to troubled youth. Often using the list and incident reviews to identify youth in need of help, individuals and teams actively engaged youth and offered them treatment, counseling, and other assistance. These same individuals and teams were also frequently deployed in the neighborhoods after violent incidents. They used these

opportunities to learn more about the incident, intervene with rival groups before retaliations took place, and counsel the victimized families. Outreach workers often shared information gathered about these incidents with law enforcement. In several SACSI sites, a clergy member or other outreach worker actually brokered relationships between offenders and law enforcement. Because of their place in the community and because of trust built on both sides, offenders were sometimes willing to turn themselves in to these individuals, even knowing that the clergy or outreach worker would then turn them into the police. These occurrences were rare, but dramatic. They assured community support for the arrest and minimized the possibility of a violent confrontation between police and the offender.

One key issue that SACSI sites using this strategy confronted was that some individuals most effective at reaching troubled youth were themselves former offenders. Finding ways to partner with these individuals was a difficult, but important, part of developing an effective outreach tactic.

Observations on implementation

SACSI interventions are extraordinarily demanding of time, commitment, management, and administration. The skills and commitment necessary to see the process through—whether vested in an individual or a group—are critical. At implementation and nearly every other stage of the SACSI process, a successful project director is the key to success. Naturally, the SACSI sites faced many implementation issues, including transitions in leadership, responsiveness and commitment of key partners, coordination

hurdles, agency commitments, resources constraints, and mid-course corrections. Two implementation issues are especially worth noting.

The strategy implementation process often led SACSI groups to rely on a relatively small, close-knit, and dedicated number of partners. While this was efficient and effective in the early days of implementation, over the long-term, some SACSI sites, found this reliance on a small number of people less effective, and perhaps ultimately defeating. That is, as members of the initial team are promoted or leave their command, new people entering the command may not understand or buy into the overall approach. This problem may be serious in the U.S. Attorneys Office or District Attorney's Office if the SACSI effort was established as an isolated office or program within the office. In these organizations, attorneys other than the ones directly involved in the SACSI working group continued business as usual, prosecuting cases without understanding the work of the problem-solving effort. Without a conscious and sustained effort by the attorneys involved in these efforts to educate and involve other attorneys in their offices, the two groups operated in isolation, and possibly even in suspicion, of each other's activities. If problem-solving efforts are to be sustained over the long term, an effort must be made to educate each working group partner's broader constituency; this may be best achieved by reaching the few people in the office who influence the rest of the group's thinking. For example, in the U.S. Attorney's Office, several SACSI sites gauged their progress on whether they could convince the Chief Criminal Prosecutor that the SACSI process was worthwhile. They could not convert every line prosecutor, but the Chief Criminal Prosecutor, if on board, would influence the broader group.

There are also issues of dosage and "tipping-points." How many times must offenders be notified before they hear the message? How about before they change their behavior? How long do strategies have to be in place before they have their intended effect? There were desperate times in both Boston and the SACSI sites when the strategy was in place but the violence continued. Working group members held their breath—sometimes for months—waiting for a change. When it came, change was almost always sudden and dramatic. Boston did not have a juvenile killed with a firearm for over 2 years; Indianapolis' targeted homicides fell almost overnight. Sometimes changes like this do not come. At this point, it is critical to reexamine the strategy to try to understand what—if anything—needs changing.

Research partners were particularly helpful in providing timely feedback on the outcomes of specific strategies. For example, simple activities like systematically debriefing after a lever-pulling meeting or surveying the individuals attending lever-pulling meetings can provide powerful information about the successes and failures of these strategies. Several SACSI sites realized from such feedback that their message, or more likely their messengers, was too harsh and that their presentation was turning off the audience. Once realized, something like this is relatively easily changed. Intermediate feedback is key to ensuring that the strategy is being carried out as planned and to understanding whether the strategy is having its intended effect.

Measuring outcomes

The SACSI sites used many techniques to determine if their interventions were

having the intended effect. Most sites took careful pre-intervention measures of key violence indicators—such as homicides, shootings, robberies, and aggravated assaults—especially in the neighborhoods where the problems were concentrated and the solutions were implemented. All sites continued to monitor the indicators monthly and, where appropriate, by neighborhood to determine the impact. If key indicators showed an effect, SACSI site researchers sought to determine whether the effects could be replicated and predicted over time. They also attempted to identify alternative interventions or other dynamics (for example, economic or demographic changes) that could have caused these effects. Some sites (for example, Winston-Salem) applied their strategies in a few neighborhoods and were able to compare the "test" areas with the "control" areas—those that experienced comparable violence but had not received the resources of the working group. The comparison of test and control areas was done to compare key indicators (crime and community safety) and to see if crime was being displaced to other areas of the city.

In addition to these measures, several sites sought to determine how the strategies were affecting the behavior of individuals. For example, researchers in Indianapolis examined data over time, gathered through a supplemental interview to NIJ's Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) program, which regularly tracks drug use by arrestees. The researchers used the ADAM interview process to assess offender awareness of SACSI tactics, to learn more about the perceptions of criminal justice system effectiveness, and to determine if perceptions had changed on the street due to the strategies. Similarly, SACSI researchers in Portland used interviews and surveys of targeted offenders to assess offender perceptions and behavior changes made as a result

of SACSI interventions. Researchers in New Haven conducted pre- and post- intervention surveys of fear of crime in neighborhoods where the interventions were most acutely focused. Other SACSI sites attempted to determine whether the notified group had taken advantage of services and opportunities provided and what effect these resources had on offenders.

SACSI site results

There is reason to believe that the SACSI model can help local working groups understand violence and develop interventions that significantly reduce violence. In Boston, youth homicides, which averaged 44 per year between 1991 and 1995, fell to 26 in 1997 and to 15 in 1998.[53] In Indianapolis, homicides leveled off abruptly in April 1999, and street-and-gang homicides (non-domestic homicides with multiple suspects or victims) were controlled to the point that the working group considered moving its focus to domestic violence. In High Point, North Carolina, street violence was virtually eliminated and homicides dropped from 15 to 2 in 1999. In Minneapolis, after developing a useful account of their violence problem, the working group implemented lever-pulling tactics the first week of June 1997. Summer homicide victimization fell from a 10-year high of 42 in 1996 to 8 in 1997.[54] Winston-Salem's statistics indicated a steep decline in the use of firearms in violent crimes in targeted areas. In Portland, where the focus was youth gun and gang violence, the data indicated a 74-percent reduction in drive-by shootings from 1995 to 2000.[55] Homicide victims age 24 or under dropped by 82 percent during this same time period. At the time of this writing, none of the SACSI target population had been involved in homicides.

The declines in targeted crime in Memphis are also significant. The reported incidents of forcible rape in the city declined from a peak in 1997 of 938 offenses to 480 reported rapes in 2000.[56] These rates continued to decline in 2000 and 2001, even as violent crime rates in the city began to increase. Despite these strong findings, researchers in Memphis struggle to explain the decreases. This has been a problem in many of the sites, and is inherent in crime reduction efforts, more generally. In Memphis, a number of explanations for reductions have been forwarded, including: 1) improved investigation and prosecution of sexual assault cases stemming from systemic changes brought by SACSI, 2) removal of violent offenders (who often commit sexual assault as part of a repertoire of criminal activity) from the community as a result of other initiatives, 3) preventative actions by potential victims resulting from SACSI presentations in schools, and 4) increased community awareness about the crime and its consequences explicitly sought through SACSI public relations efforts, resulting in deterring would-be offenders. Any of these or a combination of factors could be the explanatory variable for the change. The research team continues to monitor trends and further triangulate the issue in order to be more certain about which interventions led to the decreases in victimizations reported to the police.

Other SACSI sites may have no relevant results to which to point because the SACSI model was extremely difficult to implement. Some SACSI partnerships never came together; some never experienced breakthrough moments and therefore never developed an effective description of their violence problem. Others failed to develop or to implement strategies to prevent violence. For other sites, implementation has occurred more recently and sufficient time has not passed to allow for assessment. A few teams did

all the necessary work, but never saw the dramatic reductions in violence seen in other cities. It seems, however, that the model can work, and the tactics (with local modifications) may even be transferable. The difficulty is in the implementation, and this difficulty seems to be magnified in very large cities.[57]

Conclusion

The lesson from the Boston Gun Project and SACSI is that law enforcement can prevent future homicides. With the right team, SACSI sites frequently developed a detailed understanding of their violence problem, designed and implemented strategies to deal with their unique violence problem, and, over time, learned to assess their strategies and modify their approaches until they could predictably prevent homicides. However, many of the SACSI sites neither fully implemented the model nor realized attributable reductions in targeted violence, suggesting that the challenge is in fully implementing the model.

The Boston and SACSI experiences also suggest that this process can never really stop. When the Boston Gun Project working group stopped having any violence to talk about, they stopped meeting consistently. A few years later homicide is again a problem in Boston—but not the same problem.[58] In Indianapolis, continuous careful review of their data suggests that knives are being used in more and more crimes and that the offenders are no longer young, but age 30 and older. Similar findings are rumored to be true in Boston. These and other examples suggest that the working group must continue its efforts. SACSI is a process that allows the working group to understand and keep up with the context in which violence occurs. The final lesson from the Boston Gun Project

and the SACSI sites suggests that SACSI truly must become a new way of doing business—making implementing the model and sustaining the working group even more challenging. The successes and pitfalls from SACSI implementation are offered here with the hope that they will be avoided and that the problem-solving model will be improved upon by the Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative and any subsequent efforts.

Endnotes

1. This vignette combines elements of real homicides in Rochester, New York, and Milwaukee, Wisconsin. While not all cities have active drug markets taking place out of houses, many do. The incident described is meant to be general enough that it could plausibly occur in many U.S. cities.

2. This homicide occurred in Rochester, New York, in 2000. The author was present for a discussion of its facts that took place during a review of all homicide cases in 2000. Additional details were developed by interviews conducted by John Klofas, research partner to the Rochester SACSI site. Those details were shared with the author.

3. Tita, George, K. Jack Riley, Peter Greenwood, Jonathon Zasloff, Siddartha Khosla, and Allan Abrahamse, *Implementation of Operation Ceasefire in East Los Angeles: A Report on Process and Prospects,* report submitted to the National Institute of Justice under grant 98–IJ–CX–0043, Forthcoming.

4. See Sherman, Lawrence W., Patrick R. Gartin, and Michael E. Buerger, "Hot Spots of Predatory Crime: Routine Activities and the Criminology of Place," *Criminology* 27 (1989). David Weisburd, Lisa Maher, Lawrence Sherman, et al., "Contrasting Criminological and Crime-specific Theory: The Case of Hot Spots of Crime," *Advances in Criminological Theory* 45 (1992). Eck, John, and David Weisburd, "Crime Places in Crime Theory," in *Crime and Place,* edited by John Eck and David Weisburd, Monsey, New York: Criminal Justice Press/Willow Tree Press, 1995, 1–33.

5. See Cook, Philip, "The Epidemic of Youth Violence," paper presented for the *Perspectives on Crime and Justice* lecture series, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 1998. See also Cook, Philip, and John Laub, "The Unprecedented Epidemic of Youth Violence," in *Youth Violence*, edited by Michael Tonry and Mark H. Moore, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

6. Ibid.

7. See Fox, James Alan, *Trends in Juvenile Violence: A Report to the United States Attorney General on Current and Future Rates of Juvenile Offending,* NCJ 170379, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1996.
8. Wellford, Charles, and James Cronin, "Clearing Up Homicide Clearance Rates," *National Institute of Justice Journal*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, April 2000.

9. Much qualitative evidence suggests that many homicides in major urban areas are retaliatory in nature. Incident reviews (which will be covered later in the paper) and review of motive in case files support the evidence. However, I have yet to find someone who has quantified this dynamic. At this point, we have little more than anecdotal evidence on how long the average retaliatory dispute lingers, in other words, how much time we have to interrupt the cycle. We also do not know what proportion of assaults leads to retaliation or what are the distinguishable attributes (if there are any) of retaliatory incidents. Additional work in this area is needed.

10. Weisburd, David, "Translating Research into Practice: Reflections on the Diffusion of Crime Mapping Innovation," Keynote address delivered at the Fifth Annual International Crime Mapping Research Conference, Dallas, Texas, December 1, 2001.

11. Bayley, David, *Patterns in Policing,* New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1994.

12. Goldstein, Herman, *Problem-Oriented Policing,* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990.

13. Capowich, G., J. Roehl, and C. Andrews, *Evaluating Problem-Oriented Policing: Process and Outcome in Tulsa and San Diego,* Alexandria, VA: Institute for Social Analysis, 1995. Scott, Michael S., *Problem-Oriented Policing: Reflections on the First 20 Years*, NCJ 194043 Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, October 2000.

14. Scott, 2000 (see note 13).

15. See Scott, 2000 (see note 13). See also Kennedy, David. M., Anthony A. Braga, and Anne M. Piehl, *Developing and Implementing Operation Ceasefire: Reducing Gun Violence,* Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, September 2001.

16. Kennedy, David. M., Anthony A. Braga, and Anne M. Piehl. *Developing and Implementing Operation Ceasefire: Reducing Gun Violence.* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, September 2001.

17. Braga, Anthony A., David M. Kennedy, Anne M. Piehl, and Elin J. Waring. *Measuring the Impact of Operation Ceasefire: Reducing Gun Violence.*

Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, September 2001.

18. The issue of the "capacity" of the Boston Gun Project Team was raised with me by George Kelling after he reviewed the paper. I had not thought about the capacity issue in this way before, but realized that the Department of Justice and the SACSI sites were, in fact, attempting to replicate the capacity of team pulled together in Boston.

19. A few other cities (Boston, Massachusetts; High Point, North Carolina; Los Angeles, California; Newark, New Jersey; Omaha, Nebraska) followed along with the official SACSI sites and were given access to many of the technical assistance resources allowed to the official sites. David Kennedy also worked with a number of other cities (Baltimore, Maryland; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Stockton, California) to replicate this model.

20. The SACSI sites funded in 2000 required the United State's Attorneys Office to designate a Project Coordinator. This position, unlike the sites funded in 1998, was not funded above and beyond additional firearms prosecutors that were funded in each of these offices that year. It is also worth noting that site cluster meetings seemed particularly important to the implementation of the initiative. Sites suggested that these were among the most valuable activities the Federal government could support.

21. National Assessment of the Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative, University of Illinois–Chicago.

22. The Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative, which was launched in January 2002, supports a local research partner to help task forces understand violence problems, develop interventions designed to prevent violence, and evaluate the effectiveness of those strategies, (see www.psn.gov).

23. Kennedy, David M., "SACSI: Large-Scale Problem Solving in Criminal Justice Settings," draft report submitted to the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, under cooperative agreement number 95–DD–BX–K001, September 28, 2001.

24. Ibid.

25. See Kennedy, David M., *A Tale of One City: Reflections on the Boston Gun Project,* Washington: Brookings Press, forthcoming.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. See Gladwell, Malcolm, *The Tipping Point. How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference,* Boston: Little Brown and Company, 2000.

29. These decisions may be more palatable when it is recognized that in most cities there is more gang activity and youth crime and illegal drug sales than the police can focus on at any given time. Thus, in many SACSI sites it was not a matter of ignoring illegal behavior but rather of developing strategic interventions to reduce firearms violence.

30. Memphis's problem selection process was described to the author by the SACSI research partner.

31. Portland's problem selection process was described to the author by the SACSI project coordinator.

32. Conversations with John Klofas, SACSI Research Partner, Lori Gilmore, SACSI Project Coordinator, and Bob Duffy, Chief of Police, and observations at a meeting with the community and a meeting with the SACSI working group contributed to my understanding of the problem selection process in Rochester. In December 2000, Chief Duffy convened a Drug Summit in Rochester, inviting a few hundred community members, social service providers, and criminal justice partners. Nationally renowned experts were invited to facilitate and speak at the event. This event, and new focus, was a complete surprise to many of the SACSI working group members. While it clearly responded to community concerns, it may have sidetracked the SACSI problemsolving process, the partnership, and perhaps the implementation of the SACSI strategies, as resources were need to support both the SACSI interventions and the new interventions focused on the drug problem.

33. The SACSI sites funded in 2000 were chosen from the sites designated to receive Federal firearms prosecutors. The agreement worked out between the Department of Justice and Congress stipulated that $500,000 could be set aside from the Federal Gun Prosecution allocation for SACSI research partners only if the focus of the problemsolving efforts in these sites was firearms violence.

34. Kennedy, forthcoming (see note 25).

35. National Assessment of the Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative (see note 21).

36. Ibid.

37. Ride-alongs refer to physically "riding along" with police or other practitioners as they do their job. It can give researchers an opportunity to see the violence problem as the police see it and to see how the police respond to activities on the street. It also can foster better relationships between the researchers and the police officers.

38. McEwen, Tom, "NIJ's Locally Initiated Research Partnerships in Policing: Factors That Add Up to Success," *National Institute of Justice Journal,* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, January 1999.

39. For a full examination of the Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership see McGarrell, Edmund F., and Steven Chermak, "Problem Solving To Reduce Gang- and Drug-Related Violence in Indianapolis," in *Gangs, Youth Violence, and Community Policing,* edited by S. Decker, Belmont, California: Wadsworth. Also see McGarrell, Edmund, F. and Steven Chermak, *Strategic Approaches to Reducing Firearms Violence: Final Report on the Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership*. Final Report submitted to the National Institute of Justice, 2003.

40. There are at least two reasons police records are not helpful in evaluating motive and, in particular, gang affiliation. The first is well documented in the gang literature and involves definitions of the term "gang" that tend to either dramatically under- or over count the existence of gangs and gang-involved incidents, leaving most police data completely unreliable for these purposes. Second, police are reluctant to suggest possible motives (as well as possible drug and gang connections) in official records because these may be used against them in court. Defense attorneys can introduce doubt into an officer's statement if the file includes theories that later turn prove false. In addition, in the case of drug-involvement, defense attorneys may use this as factors that led to the commission of the crime, thereby lessening the culpability of suspects. Given this, police officers have learned that "less is more" when it comes to the incident report.

41. For more information on the Rochester SACSI site, please contact John Klofas at the Rochester Institute of Technology.

42. Information about the Rochester homicide incident review is available at http//:www.cj.msu.edu/outreach/~psn.

43. The criteria, a set of guiding questions used by David Kennedy and the Boston Gun Project came to be known by the SACSI sites as "Kennedy's Rules."

44. For more information on the VIPER program, please contact Jason Hutchens at the Marion County Justice Agency. For a full examination of the Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership, see McGarrell and Chermak, forthcoming (note 39). Also see forthcoming publications from the National Institute of Justice.

45. For more information on the violence reduction project in High Point, North Carolina, please contact Robert Lang, U.S. Attorney's Office, Middle District, North Carolina.

46. Kapsch, Steve, and Louis Lyman, *Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Research Team Final Report,* submitted to the National Institute of Justice, March 2002, page 18.

47. McGarrell and Chermak, forthcoming (note 39). Also see forthcoming publications from the National Institute of Justice.

48. Nearly all of the SACSI sites used lever-pulling and what became referred to as "lever-pulling" or "offender notification" meetings. While there were variations in how lever-pulling and lever-pulling meeting were implemented, this example is intended to be broad enough to describe any of the SACSI lever-pulling efforts. The names of homicide victims are real victims killed in Rochester, New York, in 2000. The names of convicted offenders are examples of real convictions from High Point, North Carolina.

49. Kapsch and Lyman, page 22 (see note 46).

50. McGarrell, Edmund F., and Steven Chermak, *Strategic Approaches to Reducing Homicide in Indianapolis,* Final Report submitted to the National Institute of Justice, 2002.

51. For more information on Winston-Salem's Operation Reach, please contact Sylvia Oberle, Director, Center for Community Safety at Winston-Salem State University. Also see Parent, Dale, and Brad Snyder, *Police-Corrections Partnerships,* Issues and Practices, NCJ 175047, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, March 1999.

52. This story was described to the author by Sylvia Oberle who was project coordinator of the SACSI site in Winston-Salem when the incident took place. For more information on clergy/law-enforcement partnerships in Winston-Salem, please contact her at Winston-Salem State University.

53. Braga, Anthony A., David M. Kennedy, Anne M. Piehl, and Elin J. Waring, *Measuring the Impact of Operation Ceasefire: Reducing Gun Violence,* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, September 2001.

54. Kennedy, David M., and Anthony A. Braga, "Homicide in Minneapolis: Research for Problem Solving," *Homicide Studies* 2:263–290, 1996.

55. Kapsch and Lyman, page 22 (see note 44).

56. Janikowski, Richard. Unpublished research findings. June 13, 2003. See final report submitted to the National Institute of Justice, forthcoming.

57 The University of Illinois–Chicago is conducting an evaluation of all of the SACSI sites, and the research partners in each SACSI site are documenting that site's efforts. Forthcoming SACSI publications describing each of the five SACSI sites funded in the first phase (the sites funded in late 2000 have just begun implementing interventions) should be available from the National Institute of Justice in the near future.

58. The Boston Gun project has become very active under Project Safe Neighborhoods.